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WYOMING LABOR FORCE TRENDS

VOL. 21 NO. 8 SEPT. 1984

TREND SETTERS

WYOMING	Sept. '84	Aug. '84
Labor Force	260,671	262,426
Employment	248,477	249,727
Unemployment	12,194	12,699
Rate (Raw)	4.7	4.8
Rate (S.A.)	5.6	5.5
Mining Hourly Wage	$12.97	$12.93
Avg. Weekly Hours, Mining	43.8	42.5
USA		
Rate (S.A.)	7.4	7.5
Mining Hourly Wage	$11.65	$11.57
Avg. Weekly Hours, Mining	43.9	43.6
Consumer Price Index		
All Urban 1967 = 100		
U.S. City Avg.	314.5	313.0
Denver (Bimonthly)	351.3	
Year Change (U.S.)	+4.2	+4.2

S.A.-Seasonally Adjusted

In this issue of *Trends* be sure to see this article:

— Explanation of Seasonal Adjustments

THE NATIONAL SCENE

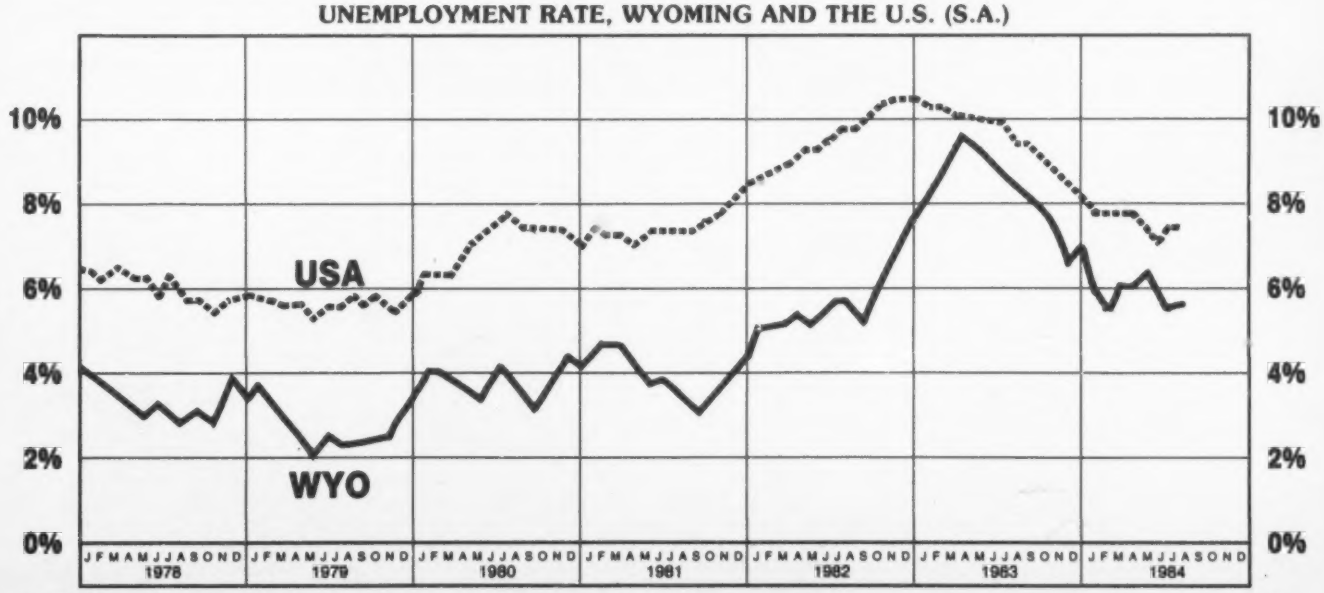
The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that nationwide employment and unemployment were little changed in September, at 105.2 million workers and 8.5 million unemployed. At 7.4 percent, the September seasonally adjusted rate was about the same as the 7.5 percent of July and August and down from the 9.2 percent recorded in September 1983. Job losers accounted for half of the total unemployed in September.

Discouraged workers—people who say they want to work but are not seeking jobs because they believe they cannot find any—numbered 1.2 million in the third quarter of 1984. This was about 600,000 below the recessionary high of 1.8 million reached in the fourth quarter of 1982 when the unemployment rate exceeded 10.5 percent.

OCTOBER RATE REMAINS AT 7.4 PERCENT FOR U.S.

The recently released national unemployment rate for October remained the same as in September—7.4 percent seasonally adjusted.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, WYOMING AND THE U.S. (S.A.)



WYOMING EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION, Research & Analysis Section

1983 UNEMPLOYMENT BY GROUPS – U.S. AND WYOMING

According to the 1983 Current Population Survey, a household survey conducted in all states by the U.S. Department of Labor, Wyoming's annual average unemployment rate of 8.4 percent was considerably less than the U.S. average of 9.6 percent. Did unemployment by groupings in the state follow the same trend? Unemployment for adult men in the U.S., at 8.9 percent, was a bit higher than Wyoming's 8.6 percent. Other groups for which comparisons are available are adult women, 8.1 and 6.7 percent; 16-19 year olds, 22.4 and 15.2 percent; whites, 8.4 and 7.9 percent; hispanics. 13.8 and 10.4 percent. Only in the case of blacks, 19.5 and 20.7 percent, did unemployment in Wyoming exceed the national average.

WYOMING UNEMPLOYMENT CONTINUES DOWNWARD TREND

The statewide seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in September registered 5.6 percent, not much different from the 5.5 percent of July and August, and almost two percentage points below the national average. The September 1983 rate was 8.2 percent. The number of unemployed at 12,200 jobseekers, the lowest number since January of 1982, continued to be sharply down from the 18,900 of September 1983.

In spite of the continuing year-to-year decline in unemployment, since the fall of last year, the employed labor force also continues to shrink. In September, almost 9,500 fewer people were working than a year ago, a decline of almost four percent. While most people would associate lower unemployment with an expanding job market this is not the case in the Wyoming economy. The unemployed are still leaving the state in search of greener pastures and there appears to be an increase in the number of discouraged workers, due to the exhaustion of unemployment benefits and lack of adequate job opportunities. Until job opportunities expand, especially in the energy sector where workers tend to have unique skills, no real employment growth is predicted.

WYOMING INDUSTRIAL TRENDS

The only noteworthy annual employment gain in the major industries took place in Contract Construction, up annually over 5,000 workers and 29 percent. Manufacturing was up 500 workers and 6 percent. Transportation and Public Utilities along with Trade and Finance, Insurance and Real Estate held at about year ago levels in September. Mining, Services, and Government employment were down from a year ago by 2,100, 1,200 and 800 workers.

REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT

The most recent data available for all 50 states is for August, in which Wyoming's unadjusted unemployment registered 4.8 percent. Of the border states, Montana, Idaho, and Utah had higher unemployment levels of 7.0, 6.6, and 5.8 percent. Nebraska, South Dakota, and Colorado had lower rates of 3.4, 3.5, and 4.7 percent. New Hampshire had the lowest rate in the nation, at 3.0 percent, and West Virginia continued at the highest with 13.6 percent.

WYOMING FIRST QUARTER 1984 WAGES UP 2.4 PERCENT

For the first time since the fourth quarter of 1982, recently compiled employer contribution data indicates an annual gain of 2.4 percent in the average weekly wage for the first quarter 1984. The all industry average of $348 a week, about $18,100 a year, included almost 16,500 firms employing over 181,500 workers covered by the Wyoming Unemployment Insurance Law. The national inflation rate, consumer price index, was up 4.5 percent annually during the same time frame.

Back in the "good old days" wages were up 12.2 percent annually in 1979, 12.6 percent in 1980, and 10.3 percent in 1981. In 1982 the annual gain had dropped to 4.8 percent and in 1983 the average weekly wage, at $341, was down 1.5 percent from 1982. Among the 50 states, Wyoming had the only annual pay decline in 1983 and was just 1.7 percent above the national average.

In the first quarter of the year Campbell County had the highest weekly wage of $449, or over $23,300 a year, followed by Sweetwater County at $432 a week. Teton County, at $235, had the lowest average weekly wage among the counties.

WYOMING SECOND QUARTER PERSONAL INCOME UP 8.5 PERCENT

According to a recent U.S. Department of Commerce release, Wyoming posted an annual gain of 8.5 percent in nonfarm personal income in the second quarter of 1984. This compared to a 9.4 percent gain for the nation. In the state, comparing the second quarter to the first quarter income was up 1.6 percent. This gain ranked Wyoming towards the bottom, 47th among the states, in percentage increases. The U.S. was up 2.5 percent over the first quarter with the largest gain, 3.5 percent, in Minnesota and the smallest gain of 0.6 percent in Delaware.

The largest industrial source of personal income in Wyoming, in the second quarter of this and last year, was the Government and Government enterprises. Compare this with 1978-1982 when Mining contributed the most in wage and salary disbursements.

In 1983 the Government was the largest employer in the state, at 48,800 workers; followed by Trade at 44,400; Services, 32,900; and Mining at 28,600. Manufacturing was the smallest industrial sector with 8,200 workers. In the U.S., Manufacturing had the highest total industrial wages paid and Mining was nearly at the bottom, only two percent of the total nonfarm earnings, compared to 21 percent in the Cowboy State.

AROUND THE STATE

The highest area rate of unemployment was in Fremont County, 7.1 percent, followed by Platte at 7.0 percent. Natrona County continued with the highest number of unemployed, over 2,000, followed by Laramie County, with over 1,400 unemployed. There were over 1,300 jobseekers in Fremont County and 1,100 in Sweetwater County. The lowest unemployment was in Johnson County at 2.2 percent. Statewide, the number of unemployed declined monthly by about 500, to approximately 12,200 out of work.

The total Civilian Labor Force was estimated to be about 260,700 in September, an unseasonal drop from the August estimate of 262,400, and a substantial decline of almost 6 percent from the September 1983 estimate of 276,900.

Historically, the labor force expands seasonally through September in Wyoming. This year that did not occur and preliminary data suggests that the labor force peaked a month earlier than normal—in August.

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Statistical modifications are made to compensate for predictable fluctuations which recur more or less regularly every year in a time series, such as unemployment rates. These fluctuations can be so strong as to distort the underlying changes in trends. For this reason unemployment rates both raw and seasonally adjusted are reported. The seasonally adjusted basis compensates for such influences as the summer closing of schools, temporary hiring for the holiday season, seasonal style changes, etc.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX - (1967 = 100)

ALL URBAN

	ALL ITEMS	FOOD	HOUSING	RENT	APPAREL	TRANSP.	MEDICAL
September 1984	314.5	304.2	341.4	252.4	204.2	313.7	383.1
Annual % Change	4.2	4.0	4.6	5.4	1.9	3.3	6.1

WAGE EARNERS AND CLERICAL WORKERS

	ALL ITEMS	FOOD	HOUSING	RENT	APPAREL	TRANSP.	MEDICAL
August 1984	312.1	303.8	336.8	251.7	203.3	316.0	381.2
Annual % Change	3.8	3.8	3.5	5.4	2.0	3.4	6.1

EMPLOYERS PLEASE HELP US

We want to encourage anyone receiving questionnaires from the Employment Security Commission to please take ten minutes to fill them out and return them. Responses are kept confidential and no data is released that would allow you or your business to be identified. The information compiled from the survey is intended to be used by these employers as well as government officials and planners. Right now the state is authorized to publish monthly hours and earnings data for only two (mining and manufacturing) of the seven major industries. Our CES staff is working very hard to increase the sample size (presently it's around 1,550 employers). Employer response is of utmost importance in helping to create an adequate sample. In addition to the employment levels now published for all industries, we also would very much like to publish the hours and earnings data for those other five industries.

Table 1

WYOMING ECONOMIC INDICATORS

ITEM	SEP 1984 [1]	AUG 1984 [1]	SEP 1983 [2]	Percent Change From A Month Ago	Percent Change From A Year Ago
WYOMING EMPLOYMENT DATA					
Total Civilian Labor Force	260,671	262,426	276,883	- 0.7	- 5.9
Unemployment	12,194	12,699	18,927	- 4.0	- 35.6
Employed Labor Force	248,477	249,727	257,956	- 0.5	- 3.6
a. Covered Employment (Under Wyo. UI Law) [3]	194,300	193,500	197,616	0.4	- 1.6
b. Agriculture [3]	16,469	16,469	16,772	0.0	- 1.8
Total Unemployment Rate (Wyo.) Seas. Adj.*	4.7% 5.6%*	4.8% 5.5%*	6.8% 8.2%*	XXX	XXX
Total Unemployment Rate (U.S.) Seas. Adj.*	7.1% 7.4%*	7.3% 7.5%*	8.8% 9.2%*	XXX	XXX
Insured Unemployment Rate (Wyo.) [4]	1.2%	1.4%	2.4%	XXX	XXX
HOURS & EARNINGS					
Mining (Production Workers):					
Average Weekly Earnings	$ 568.09	$ 549.53	$ 520.38	3.4	9.2
Average Weekly Hours	43.8	42.5	42.0	3.1	4.3
Average Hourly Earnings	$ 12.97	$ 12.93	$ 12.39	0.3	4.7
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE					
Claims Filed in Local Offices	11,082	15,661	28,261	- 29.2	- 60.8
a. Initial	1,580	1,917	2,477	- 17.6	- 36.2
Weeks Compensated	8,402	12,930	28,370	- 35.0	- 70.4
Total Amount Benefits Paid	$ 1,230,131	$ 1,856,881	$ 4,027,482	- 33.8	- 69.5
Average Weekly Benefit Payment	$ 146.41	$ 143.61	$ 141.96	1.9	3.1
EMPLOYMENT SERVICE					
New Applications Received During Month	3,565	4,545	4,942	- 21.6	- 27.8
Non-Ag. Openings Received	4,048	5,112	2,994	- 20.8	35.2
Non-Ag. Placements	3,492	3,988	4,385	- 12.4	- 20.4
UNITED STATES DATA					
HOURS & EARNINGS					
Mining (Production Workers):					
Average Weekly Earnings	$ 511.44	$ 504.45	$ 488.32	1.4	4.7
Average Weekly Hours	43.9	43.6	43.1	0.7	1.9
Average Hourly Earnings	$ 11.65	$ 11.57	$ 11.33	0.7	2.8
PRICE INDEXES					
Consumer Price Index 1967 = 100	314.5	313.0	301.8	0.5	4.2
Producer Prices, All Commodities	309.5	310.9	305.3	- 0.5	1.4
Retail Prices of Food 1967 = 100	304.2	304.8	292.6	- 0.2	4.0

[1] Preliminary. [2] Final. [3] Not Benchmarked to the Current Population Survey. [4] Rate does not include claimants receiving benefits under extended benefit provisions.

Table 2

WYOMING
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE & UNEMPLOYMENT

COUNTY	LABOR FORCE					UNEMPLOYMENT			UNEMPLOYMENT RATE		
	SEP 1984	AUG 1984	SEP 1983	%CHANGE AUG-SEP	%CHANGE SEP-SEP	SEP 1984	AUG 1984	SEP 1983	SEP 1984	AUG 1984	SEP 1983
Statewide	260,671	262,426	276,883	- 0.7	- 5.9	12,194	12,699	18,927	4.7	4.8	6.8
Albany	15,661	15,347	16,054	2.0	- 2.4	461	493	824	2.9	3.2	5.1
Big Horn	5,404	5,357	5,968	0.9	- 9.5	257	277	332	4.8	5.2	5.6
Campbell	17,974	18,471	20,362	- 2.7	- 11.7	811	833	1,253	4.5	4.5	6.2
Carbon	9,208	9,406	10,909	- 2.1	- 15.6	404	416	1,055	4.4	4.4	9.7
Converse	7,163	7,034	7,746	1.8	- 7.5	366	379	474	5.1	5.4	6.1
Crook	3,131	3,106	3,243	0.8	- 3.5	108	118	165	3.5	3.8	5.1
Fremont	18,799	17,981	20,226	4.5	- 7.1	1,334	1,413	1,562	7.1	7.9	7.7
Goshen	7,454	7,382	7,502	1.0	- 0.6	322	342	254	4.3	4.6	3.4
Hot Springs	3,087	3,025	3,173	2.0	- 2.7	112	115	155	3.6	3.8	4.9
Johnson	4,252	4,193	4,582	1.4	- 7.2	93	105	188	2.2	2.5	4.1
Laramie	35,049	34,848	35,374	0.6	- 0.9	1,441	1,318	2,284	4.1	3.8	6.5
Lincoln	6,478	6,383	6,611	1.5	- 2.0	301	343	520	4.7	5.4	7.9
Natrona	39,192	39,392	40,654	- 0.5	- 3.6	2,024	2,162	3,896	5.2	5.5	9.6
Niobrara	1,757	1,682	1,775	4.5	- 1.0	84	79	105	4.8	4.7	5.9
Park	15,319	17,756	15,597	- 13.7	- 1.8	557	612	609	3.6	3.4	3.9
Platte	4,038	3,949	4,414	2.3	- 8.5	281	305	366	7.0	7.7	8.3
Sheridan	14,446	14,307	15,007	1.0	- 3.7	842	881	961	5.8	6.2	6.4
Sublette	2,490	2,492	2,799	- 0.1	- 11.0	79	98	156	3.2	3.9	5.6
Sweetwater	20,116	19,643	23,945	2.4	- 16.0	1,104	1,173	2,108	5.5	6.0	8.8
Teton	9,433	10,824	9,678	- 12.9	- 2.5	268	235	310	2.8	2.2	3.2
Uinta	11,088	10,793	11,646	2.7	- 4.8	608	602	809	5.5	5.6	6.9
Washakie	5,439	5,408	5,621	0.6	- 3.2	197	243	272	3.6	4.5	4.8
Weston	3,694	3,648	3,997	1.3	- 7.6	138	156	268	3.7	4.3	6.7

Table 3

NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT IN WYOMING [1]

(Prepared in Cooperation with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT (In thousands)			% Change on Total Emp.	
	SEP 1984[2]	AUG 1984 [3]	SEP 1983	AUG 1984	AUG 1983
	Total	Total	Total	to SEP 1984	to SEP 1984
WYOMING NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT					
Total Non-Farm Wage & Salary Employment	213.0	212.6	211.4	0.2	0.8
Manufacturing	9.0	8.9	8.5	1.1	5.9
Durable Goods	4.2	4.4	4.1	- 4.5	2.4
Nondurable Goods	4.8	4.5	4.4	6.7	9.1
Petroleum & Coal Products	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.0	0.0
Total Non-Manufacturing Employment	204.0	203.7	202.9	0.1	0.5
Mining	26.9	27.6	29.0	- 2.5	- 7.2
Contract Construction	23.3	23.5	18.1	- 0.8	28.7
Transportation & Public Utilities	16.3	16.6	16.5	- 1.8	- 1.2
Railroad Transportation	3.2	3.3	3.4	- 3.0	- 5.9
Transportation except Railroads	6.3	6.4	6.2	- 1.6	1.6
Comm., Elect., Gas & Sani. Serv.	6.8	6.9	7.0	- 1.4	- 2.9
Wholesale & Retail Trade	45.6	46.3	45.4	- 1.5	0.4
Wholesale Trade	8.6	8.6	8.8	0.0	- 2.3
Retail Trade	37.0	37.7	36.6	- 1.9	1.1
Ret. Gen. Mdse., App. & Access. Stores	6.4	6.5	5.7	1.5	12.3
Food Stores	5.0	4.9	5.1	2.0	- 2.0
Automotive Dealers & Serv. Stat.	6.3	6.7	6.2	- 6.0	1.6
Eating & Drinking Places	13.0	13.2	13.0	- 1.5	0.0
Other Retail Trade	6.3	6.4	6.6	- 0.6	- 4.5
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	7.6	7.7	7.6	- 1.3	0.0
Services	33.2	34.9	34.4	- 4.8	- 15.7
Personal Services	2.0	2.0	1.6	0.0	25.0
Medical & Other Health Services	6.3	6.4	6.5	- 1.6	- 3.1
Government	51.1	47.1	51.9	8.5	- 1.5
Federal Government	7.4	8.5	7.1	- 12.9	4.2
State & Local Government	43.7	38.6	44.8	13.2	- 2.5
State Government	12.4	12.0	12.5	3.3	- 0.8
Local Government	31.3	26.6	32.3	17.7	- 3.1

(See Footnotes at End of Table)

NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT IN WYOMING [1]

Table 3 (Cont'd) *(Prepared in Cooperation with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)*

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT (In thousands)			% Change on Total Emp.	
	SEP 1984[2]	AUG 1984 [3]	SEP 1983	AUG 1984	AUG 1983
	Total	Total	Total	to SEP 1984	to SEP 1984
CASPER (Natrona County)					
TOTAL NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT	35.5	35.4	33.6	0.3	5.7
Manufacturing	1.5	1.4	1.3	7.1	15.4
Nondurable Goods	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.0	12.5
Petroleum & Coal Products	0.6	0.5	0.5	20.0	20.0
Total Non-Manufacturing Employment	34.0	34.0	32.3	0.0	5.3
Mining	5.3	5.4	5.0	- 1.9	6.0
Oil & Gas Extraction	4.7	4.7	4.5	0.0	4.4
Other Mining, Quarrying, etc.	0.6	0.7	0.5	- 14.3	20.0
Contract Construction	2.9	3.0	2.3	- 3.3	26.1
Transportation & Public Utilities	2.2	2.2	2.4	0.0	- 8.3
Wholesale & Retail Trade	9.5	9.5	9.2	0.0	3.3
Wholesale Trade	3.5	3.5	3.5	0.0	0.0
Retail Trade	6.0	6.0	5.6	0.0	7.1
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1.6	1.7	1.7	- 5.9	- 5.9
Services	5.8	5.9	5.9	- 1.7	- 1.7
Government	6.7	6.3	5.8	6.3	15.5
Federal Government	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0
State & Local Government	6.0	5.6	5.1	7.1	17.6
CHEYENNE (Laramie County)					
TOTAL NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT	31.5	31.2	29.6	1.0	6.4
Manufacturing	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0
Total Non-Manufacturing Employment	30.5	30.2	28.6	1.0	6.6
Contract Construction	2.2	2.3	1.9	- 4.3	15.8
Transportation & Public Utilities	3.4	3.7	3.7	- 8.1	- 8.1
Wholesale & Retail Trade	7.5	7.6	7.0	- 1.3	7.1
Wholesale Trade	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.0	8.3
Retail Trade	6.6	6.7	6.2	- 1.5	6.5
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1.8	1.8	1.7	0.0	5.9
Services & Miscellaneous	6.1	6.0	4.9	1.7	24.5
Government	9.5	8.8	9.4	8.0	1.1
Federal Government	2.4	2.4	2.3	0.0	4.3
State & Local Government	7.1	6.4	7.1	10.9	0.0

[1] Estimates include all full and part-time wage and salary workers in non-ag, establishments who worked or received pay during the week which includes the 12th of the month. Proprietors, self-employeds, domestic servants and personnel of the armed forces are excluded. [2] Subject to revision. [3] Revised figures.

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WYOMING LABOR FORCE TRENDS

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